

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SINGAP 00600 111104Z

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

/056 W

-----111114Z 006427 /22

R 110928Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7113

INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SINGAPORE 600

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, SN

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT SHEARES OPENS FIRST SESSION OF FOURTH PARLIAMENT

REF: 76 SINGAPORE 5779

1. PRESIDENT SHEARES OPENED THE FOURTH PARLIAMENT ON FEBRUARY 8 WITH A SHORT TELEVISED SPEECH THAT ENCAPSULATED SEVERAL WELL-KNOWN PAP THEMES AND MADE A STRONG PITCH FOR CONSTRUCTIVE BACKBENCH CRITICISM OF GOVERNMENTAL POLICIES. CONTRASTING PREVAILING SITUATION TO THAT WHICH EXISTED AT CONVENING IN 1972 OF PREVIOUS PARLIAMENT (PRIOR TO OIL PRICE INCREASES, WORLD RECESSION AND FALL OF INDOCHINA), SHEARES NOTED SINGAPORE'S DIMINISHED SECURITY AND ECONOMIC PROSPECTS. HE ALSO MADE REFERENCE TO THE CONTINUED THREAT OF COMMUNIST SUBVERSION, THE GOS REJECTION OF VARIOUS SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAMS AS UNECONOMINCAL, AND THE NEED TO SAFEGUARD SINGAPOREAN CULTURE FROM DESTRUCTIVE WESTERN INFLUENCES. SHEARES STRONGLY NOTED THE ESSENTIAL NATURE OF THE GOS DETENTION OF FULL TEXT BEING POUCHED TO DEPARTMENT. COMMUNIST ELEMENTS.

2. SHEARES' CALL TO "ENSURE THAT ALL SHADES OF OPINION OUT IN THE CONSTITUENCIES ARE VIGOROUSLY VOICED IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS AND DEBATES" WAS STRONGLY SUPPORTED IN STRAITS TIMES (ST) FEBRUARY 9 EDITORIAL.

" THE INTENTION TO ALLOW FREER DEBATE...HAS AGAIN BEEN EMPHASIZED...AND IT IS TO BE HOPED THAT THE PARLIAMENT... WILL TAKE SERIOUSLY THE CALL TO RELAMT THE MOOD OF THE

CONSTITUENCIES."

3. COMMENT. SHEARES' CALL ECHOED SIMILAR APPEALS MADE BY PAP CHAIRMAN TOH CHIN CHYE (REFTTEL) AND HOUSE LEADER BARKER ON FEBRUARY 7, AND INDICATES THAT THE PAP LEADERSHIP HAS AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO UNLEASH BACKBENCH MPS IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE "CONSTRUCTIVE" DISSENT. IF FULFILLED, SHEARES' HOPES THAT "NO MAJOR POLICY OR LEGISLATION SHOULD BE PASSED WITHOUT THE CLOSED (SIC) SCRUTINY", WOULD PREPARE A CHANGE IN THE PREVIOUS TENDENCY OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE TO MAKE MAJOR POLICY DECISIONS WITHOUT PARLIAMENTARY DISCUSSION. HOWEVER, IT IS BY NO MEANS CERTAIN HOW FAR LEE KUAN YEW WILL ALLOW DISSENT AND DEBATE ON IMPORTANT ISSUES TO RANGE.
HOLDRIDGE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CENTRAL LEGISLATURE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 11-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977SINGAP00600
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770049-0693
Format: TEL
From: SINGAPORE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770249/aaaabrje.tel
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Litigation History:
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Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 SINGAPORE 5779
Retention: 0
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Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
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SAS ID: 3338300
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
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TAGS: PGOV, PINT, SN, (SHEARES)
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